Main Identity

From: "LunchBreak" <lunchbreak@ppglcc.org>
To: <lunchbreak@ppglcc.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 05, 2005 11:00 AM
Subject: LunchBreak Newsletter 05-05-2005

894;fb5404476bb2c8542bb826149e64dbde
Contact Us: LunchBreak@ppglcc.org

TOPICS:

- THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SOULFORCE EVENT
- **The battle for equal rights continues - But we're gaining ground!**
- **COUPLE OF REMINDERS**
- **FUSION! Potluck and Game Night - May 8**
- **50+ Group - May 7**
- **Lesbian Singles - May 20**

THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SOULFORCE EVENT

It was rainy and cold, but it didn't dampen the spirits of those of us who participated in the Soulforce events last Sunday and Monday. Nearly 1,000 gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and wonderful allies gathered for music, speeches, really good hot dogs, hamburgers, and chicken sandwiches, downed with pop, hot chocolate and coffee. Two large rainbows, made up of a few hundred hellium-filled balloons, reigned proudly over the day, telling all who drove by, or wondered from afar about the goings on outside Focus on the Family, that the gay community and its allies were on the streets and unafraid.

The event was peaceful and all the players were present. Westboro Baptist Church came in from Kansas. They arrived on Saturday in time for nonviolence training at Pikes Peak Metropolitan Church. As I drove into the lot at MCC, I smiled, and commented to the parking attendant. "Looks like our friends are here." She smiled too. Sometimes it's too surreal for anything other than silence.

As Sunday wore on, there was a press conference, with cameras rolling and flash bulbs popping. But, for the most part, we just took in the crowd, the cold, the speakers, the music and the irony that the only thing that separated the Baptist's on the corner, the white Focus tents on the hill, and our community on the streets, were words. Words.

On Monday, some 125 of us gathered again, this time at the Hilton just northeast of FOTF. We learned that the Raitan family--mother, father and their gay son--would engage in an act of civil disobedience if they were not allowed to deliver their letter to the highest ranking person at FOTF. We marched in silence the mile or so to the Focus campus and stood, holding hands, while the Raitans read their letter out loud to the press. When they were told they could not enter the grounds, they said that they had traveled too far to be turned away and walked a few feet onto the campus where upon they were arrested. As they were transported away for processing, we sang "Amazing Grace."

Since the Soulforce event was first publicized, and even as it unfolded, we have received many comments. Not all supportive, not all positive, even from our own community and allies. That is the beauty of the country in which we live, that we can choose not to participate, choose when and where to speak our mind. For those of us who where there for the entire event, it was moving. Moving not because we hoped to change FOTF or James Dobson, but moving because we were VISIBLE and VOCAL. We made it absolutely clear that words CAN harm and DO harm families and children.

Thanks Mark, Kathleen, Wayne, Bill, Ryan, Diane, Nora, Robert, Alex, Ginny, Nori, Rachel, Gary, Soulforce, and all the other folks I saw or talked to those awesome days! Thank you for coming out--COMING OUT! That's what it was all about! Being visible! Saying, I am worthy, valuable, lovable, and I will not settle until I enjoy what every straight American enjoys--total, and unequivocal equality. Equal rights. Civil rights.

Thanks to Pikes Peak Metropolitan Church who worked tirelessly with Soulforce to bring them to our community. Thanks to Nori and Rachel and their entire team for their courage, for never wavering, for having faith, for standing for us when we cannot or will not stand for ourselves.

"War does not determine who wins. War determines who is left." (Bless the wisdom of the random Fortune Cookie) We must stand up and speak for ourselves whenever and wherever the opportunity arises. Nonviolence teaches us to approach our detractors from the heart, not from anger or hate. To step back and realize that we are all on this planet together, and that in order for us to live in universal peace, we must look within and without - being as vigilant of our own words and actions, as we are of those who see us as less than they and therefore unworthy of equality.

Thank you!
Linda Devocelle
Executive Director
PPGLCC

The battle for equal rights continues - But we're gaining ground!
NOTE 1: On Tuesday, Republicans failed to get a constitutional ban on gay marriage on the November ballot after opponents called it an attempt to write discrimination into the state Constitution. The committee killed the measure on a 6-5 party line vote after Democrats said it was unconstitutional . . . Last November, 11 states outlawed same-sex marriage. Religious groups are supporting similar measures in about 15 other states over the next two years.

NOTE: 2 On Wednesday, the General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the rhetoric of Westboro Baptist Church, stating that it does not support discrimination against the gay and transgendered community, nor does it welcome the likes of Fred Phelps in Colorado.

COUPLE OF REMINDERS

FUSION! Potluck and Game Night - May 8
Potluck/Game Night is this Sunday, May 8th, at 6 pm. Bring a dish to share and, if you like, a board or card game. Our hosts will be Gene and Mike. For RSVP and directions, call them at 574-7216 or email eugn19@aol.com.

50+ Group - May 7
Join the 50 plusers for conversation and commaraderie this Saturday, May 7 at 3pm at the Pride Center for a conversation about the truth that "You Don't have to be Lonely." The Pride Center is located at 716 1/2 N. Tejon, just off the alley behind the big, brown Unitarian Church at the corner of Dale and Tejon. For more info on any of the Center groups, call (719) 471-4429.

Lesbian Singles - May 20
Lesbian Singles resumes on Friday, May 20, at the Pride Center at 5:30pm. If you're a single lesbain, bisexual or trangendered woman, come on by for some conversation and refreshments. For info, just contact the Pride Center at (719) 471-4429.

DISCLAIMER
The views expressed in the LunchBreak Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Pikes Peak Gay and Lesbian Community Center, unless otherwise noted. If you would like to be removed from this e-newsletter service, please contact us with your name and email address at: LunchBreak@ppglcc.org Thank you very much.

No virus found in this incoming message.
Checked by AVG Anti-Virus.
Version: 7.0.308 / Virus Database: 266.11.3 - Release Date: 05/03/2005